

Tummy Time



for Babies

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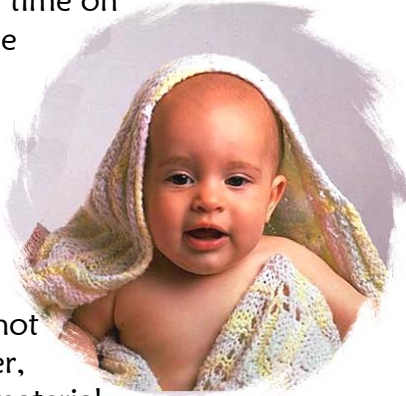


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Health care providers recommend that babies sleep on their backs to reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). This does not mean, however, that babies should never be placed on their tummy when awake. Babies need tummy time, too. A baby needs time on his tummy so he can develop the strength and skills he will need for crawling, walking, rolling over and using his hands.



The best place to lay a baby is on a clean, firm surface like a mat on the floor, or on a blanket on the carpet. Be sure not to use a fluffy blanket, comforter, sheepskin, pillow or other soft material for your baby to lay on. Be sure he is safe and can't roll off from any height. You should be watching baby nearby, even spending time face-to-face with him, but allow him to explore on his own. If your baby gets tired and falls asleep, gently roll him onto his back for sleep.

Some babies don't like tummy time and may cry until they develop some comfort and control. They may lay flat and refuse to lift their heads or move their arms. That's when parents need to get creative. Here are some suggestions to help babies enjoy playing on their tummies:

Lay your baby on your chest while you lie on the floor. That puts the two of you eye-to-eye, giving baby a view of you instead of the floor. Gently sway from side to side or even do sit-ups to keep him entertained.



Put a rolled up towel under your baby's chest. This gives him a bit of a boost, helping him push up his arms with a little head start.

Offer your baby certain toys such as a play quilt or a plastic mirror that will entertain him while he is on his tummy.



Get on the floor with your baby and lie on your tummy next to him. He'll enjoy the company and you'll both have fun!

Place baby on his tummy when he is most content, energetic and happy.



Change baby's position every 15 – 20 minutes. Try tummy time again later in the day.

Respond to your baby's cries but offer toys or distractions first before picking up. The more your baby practices tummy time, the stronger and more comfortable he will become.

As your baby becomes more mobile, make sure the area is safe from hazards while letting him explore his new environment.

